

Clay Spur Bentonite Plant and Camp, Water Tower
Clay Spur Siding on the Burlington Northern
Railroad
4 miles northwest of Osage
Weston County
Wyoming

HAER No. WY-23-C

HAER
WYO,
23-0516.V
1-C-

PHOTOCRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
P. O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Clay Spur Bentonite Plant and Camp, Water Tower

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Location: Clay Spur Siding on the Burlington Northern Railroad,
4 miles northwest of Osage in Weston County, Wyoming

Dates of Construction: 1930-1934

Present Owner: N. L. Baroid
Alzada Star Route
Belle Fourche, South Dakota

Present Use: Abandoned; site to be razed

Significance: The Clay Spur Bentonite Plant and Camp is associated with the early 20th century bentonite mining industry in Wyoming and the United States. The Clay Spur Bentonite District was the center of the pioneer Wyoming bentonite industry and remained the premier Wyoming producing district until reserves began to dwindle in the 1950s. The plant embodies the distinctive engineering technology of the bentonite industry. The camp also reflects early twentieth century company town architecture with simple buildings and floor plans that could be quickly and cheaply constructed and adapted to many different uses.

The water storage tower is wood frame with a 19-foot square base consisting of a tapered wood frame enclosure covered with corrugated metal sheeting. A hexagonal-shaped wooden deck is built on top of the base about twenty feet above the ground. A large metal water tank, nine feet in diameter and about ten feet high, rests on the platform. There is a metal ladder leading to the deck and to the top of the water tank. There are wooden railings around the platform. A door on the south elevation of the base leads to the interior of the tower. The interior is empty except for the central pipes leading from the well up to the storage tank. There is a wooden rail fence, 16 feet east-west by 21 feet north-south, around the front of the water tower. Early photographs indicate that the

Clay Spur Bentonite Plant and Camp
Water Tower
HAER No. WY-23-C
(Page 2)

water tank has been modified and may have originally been made of wood. It was constructed between 1930 and 1934.

Historian: Robert Rosenberg
Historical Consultant

July 1989

NOTE: For more information, see Clay Spur Bentonite Plant and Camp,
HAER No. WY-23.